

FROM THE EDITOR

As this edition of The Citizen was being sent to press, U.S.-led coalition forces were, in the words of Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld, "closer to the center of the Iraqi capital than many American commuters are to their downtown offices."

In Kaiserslautern, Army Pfc. Jessica Lynch was resting after what was termed "successful surgery" in Landstuhl Regional Medical Center one day after her dramatic rescue from captivity in an Iraqi hospital.

And CNN was reporting that U.S. troops were in control of Baghdad's Saddam International Airport.

So why, then, are anti-war protesters on the front page of The Citizen?

For one reason, in addition to providing a forum for both command information and community feedback, this newspaper also serves as a "work-in-progress" historical record of life in the 6th Area Support Group.

While our primary focus is on the men and women who comprise the Stuttgart-area military community, we also have an obligation to address issues of significance within our host nation that relate to our presence here.

Not addressing the ongoing protests would also be a disservice to the members of our community, for whom host-nation cultural awareness should be of premium importance. From continuing positive relations with our German neighbors to taking appropriate personal security measures, remaining alert and informed is essential to living safely and productively overseas.

Finally, we record their dissenting voices here because our service members put themselves on the line each day to preserve and protect the right of people to do just that – give voice to the passions in their heart, without fear of repression or reprisal.

I'd appreciate hearing your thoughts on this or any other issue affecting life in the 6th ASG. My e-mail address is citizen@stuttgart.army.mil. – HCM

40 years and counting: Wiedmann achieves employment milestone

Story & photo by
Hugh C. McBride

More than four decades ago, Gerhard Wiedmann took what he intended to be a temporary job with the U.S. Army before he immigrated to America.

Forty years (and counting) later, Wiedmann has yet to even visit the nation across the Atlantic, but he continues to build bridges between the American military and its European workforce.

As chairman of the 6th Area Support Group Works Council, Wiedmann serves as a liaison between local national employees and the military.

In this role, he oversees a variety of workplace issues, such as mediating employee-supervisor conflicts and ensuring that management policies and procedures do not violate German labor laws.

Since beginning his career as a housing inspector in the now-closed Göppingen military community, Wiedmann says his philosophy has remained basically unchanged: "Take care of employees and work together with management."



Gerhard Wiedmann stands between two flags that hold special significance to him. A German citizen, Wiedmann recently completed his 40th year of service with the U.S. military.

Wiedmann has been active in Works Council affairs since 1965, and has been the full-time chairman of Stuttgart's council since 1992.

Though many Americans assume the Works Council is the equivalent of an American labor union, Wiedmann says the adversarial nature that often accompanies company/union standoffs is contrary to the Works Council concept.

"The Army is not my enemy," he said. "The Army is my employer. My job is to negotiate on a faithful basis and consider the needs of both man-

What most impresses me about Herr Wiedmann is his sincere manner.

Col. Larry Stubblefield
6th ASG Commander

agement and employees."

One person who should know confirms that Wiedmann puts this philosophy to practice.

"The thing that most impresses me about Herr Wiedmann is his integrity and his sincere manner," said Col. Larry Stubblefield, 6th ASG commander.

"If he brings a problem to my attention, I know that he has researched the issue, and that his heart is in finding a solution. He's a great partner."

With 40 years' work behind him – and that long-delayed trip to the States still in the plans – Wiedmann says his focus remains on the people he describes as "my family."

"I like to work with people to find solutions that they can all be satisfied with," he said. "This job is my life."

IN THE MAIL

OCSC president thanks community

An open letter to the members of the 6th Area Support Group community:

As the president of the Stuttgart Officers and Civilians Spouses' Club, I would like to thank the entire Stuttgart military community for the wonderful assistance we recently received with our annual Spring Bazaar.

Thanks to the efforts of everyone involved, we were able not only to have our Bazaar, but to far exceed our expectations of success. We were able to increase our after-expense profits this year, of which 100 percent goes back into the community in the form of donations to various organizations.

We all know what trying times we are currently living under, but this did nothing to hamper the enthusiasm of everyone who generously offered assistance in every aspect of this endeavor.

I would be remiss if I didn't mention the following individuals and organizations who were involved in making this event happen:

- The Provost Marshal's office as well as all the MPs, dog handlers and dogs, for all their help— especially considering the increased force protection requirements they were working under.
- Total Maintenance Stuttgart, for providing the electrical hookups and making sure that they kept working all weekend.
- The communications folks for providing our public address system.
- Stuttgart-area Marines, for putting up and taking down the tents.
- Installation Coordinator Manager Ty Stearn and his staff. They were always out there bright and early cleaning up and making sure the facilities were in tip-top shape.
- The 6th ASG Fire Department and Safety Office for their guidance and help.
- 6th ASG Commander Col. Larry Stubblefield, for his unwavering support.
- Leon and Hawk, for their invaluable assistance.
- The 6th ASG Directorate of Community Activities.

I am truly humbled by the wonderful things this community is willing to do for its own.

I thank each of you from the bottom of my heart.

■ The staffs of the Patch Fitness Center, Youth Services, VAT Office and Community Club staff for letting us take over their areas and for being so helpful with all our needs in the process.

■ Chief Jack Goldman and the Patch JROTC for providing an honor guard for our opening ceremony as well as for their labor to set up and then clean up.

■ The Patch High School athletic teams and the Boy Scouts for helping set up and take down.

■ The Public Affairs Office for helping get the word out and publicizing our event.

■ The vendors, who come from all corners of Europe and always say this is their favorite Bazaar.

■ All the other volunteers, too numerous to individually thank, but who nonetheless made this event flow smoothly.

■ And last but not least, a special thanks goes out to Sherri Funk and her fabulous Bazaar Committee. These women work all year to make this event look like it happens automatically. They were truly a wonderful team, working together for the good of the community.

There is a saying that "it takes a village to raise a child." Likewise, you could say it takes a community to put on a bazaar. I am truly humbled by the wonderful things this community is willing to do for its own.

I thank each of you from the bottom of my heart.

Donni Hodgkins
Stuttgart OCSC President

[For more about the OCSC Spring Bazaar see page 3]

THE CITIZEN

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The Citizen is an offset press publication printed in 6,500 copies every two weeks.

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